

Early Learning and Child Care - Child Care Services -

- A variety of publicly funded programs and services addressing child care are offered across Washington State. It is estimated that over 250,000 Washington children are in some type of child care. The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Division of Child Care and Early Learning is responsible for regulating licensed child care facilities and managing child care subsidies. The Washington State Department of Health and other agencies provide infrastructural support to assist providers in providing quality child care services.

DSHS Division of Child Care and Early Learning Services

What is the service?

- Division of Child Care and Early Learning (DCCCEL), part of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), seeks to provide coordinated and comprehensive child care for families and child care providers.¹
- DCCCEL website: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dcccel/index.shtml>
- DCCCEL licenses child care homes and centers, and works to ensure that licensing requirements are met.²
 - Licenses must be renewed every 3 years
 - Child care homes are monitored every 18 months
 - Child centers are monitored every year
- DCCCEL manages Working Connections Child Care (WCCC), which provides subsidized child care services to families in the Workfirst program and working families at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- DCCCEL collaborates with the federal Head Start program
 - For more information please see the separate Services Chapter entitled “*Early Learning and Child Care: Head Start, Early Head Start, and ECEAP*”
- DCCCEL handles complaints and questions, and provides resources through referrals and mailings.
- DCCCEL develops policies and procedures regarding licensing requirements, rules, etc.
- DCCCEL manages statewide contracted programs which:
 1. Pay subsidies for child care for homeless families and seasonally employed agricultural workers.
 2. Provide parents information on local licensed child care and how to select child care.
 3. Assist providers with locating resources and provide professional development.
- DCCCEL presents research and data analysis.

¹ Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration. “Division of Child Care and Early Learning”. Website: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dcccel/glossary.shtml#wccc>. Accessed October 2005.

² According to the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, “A **Child Care Home** is a facility in the family residence of the licensed provider that provides regularly scheduled care for twelve or fewer children, aged zero through eleven-years old. A **Child Care Center** is a facility providing regularly scheduled care for a group of children one month of age through twelve years of age for periods less than twenty-four hours.”

How/where is it provided?

- Child care is provided by approximately 9,000 licensed centers and homes across Washington as well as family, friends, and neighbors.

Who is eligible?

- DCCCEL works with all child care providers.
- All children in Washington can attend licensed child care.
- Families in the Workfirst program and working families with incomes at or below 200% federal poverty level are eligible to receive subsidized child care.

Who is receiving the service?

- Approximately 166,000 children were enrolled in licensed child care centers and homes in 2004.
- It is estimated that another 90,000 children are in unlicensed care.
- Almost 30% of licensed care is subsidized by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).
- While not all sites are currently serving DSHS clients, most sites are willing to serve these children.

Estimates of Children in Licensed and Unlicensed Child Care, 2004 ^{3,4}

	Children Enrolled
Licensed Care	
Childcare Centers	118,700
Family Homes	46,980
Total Licensed Care	165,680
Unlicensed Care	
Out-of-Home	54,470
In-Home	36,230
Total Unlicensed Care	90,700
Total in Child care	256,380

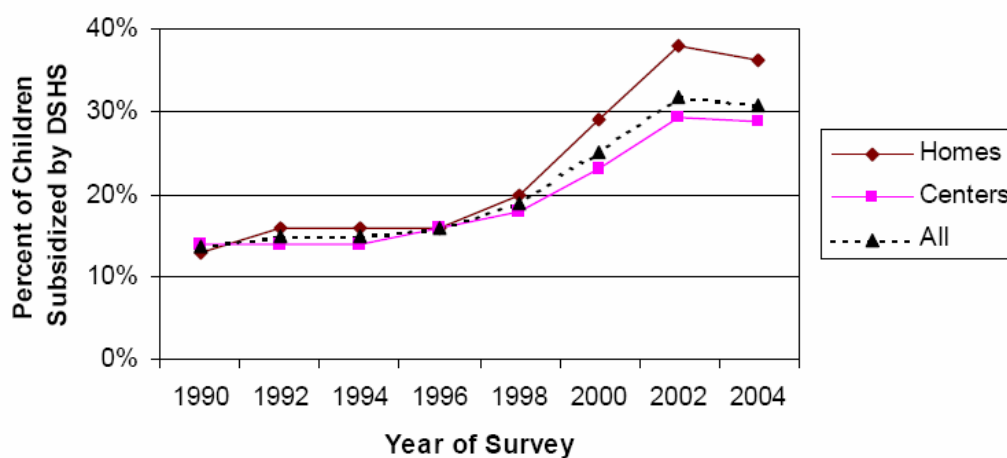
³ Unlicensed care was estimated from proportions in 1990 Child Care Survey. [*Child Care Rates in Washington: 1990*]

⁴ Licensed Child Care in Washington State, 2004. Division of Child Care and Early Learning, Economic Services Administration, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, 2005, page 9.

Availability and Use of Licensed Child Care ⁵

	Number of sites	Percent of Sites Currently Serving DSHS Children	Percent of Sites Willing to Take DSHS children	Total Child Care Slots	DSHS Subsidized Slots	Percent of Total Slots which are Subsidized	Vacant Slots	Percent of Total Slots which are Vacant
Licensed Centers	2,134	87%	96%	124,683	34,091	27%	20,241	16%
Licensed Homes	6,875	66%	94%	58,728	17,035	29%	11,544	20%
Total Licensed Facilities	9,009	71%	94%	183,411	51,126	28%	31,966	17%

DSHS Subsidized Children as Percent of All Children in Licensed Facilities, 1990-2004 ²



Source: DSHS Division of Child Care and Early Learning
1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004 Surveys of Child Care Centers and Family Homes

⁵ Licensed Child Care in Washington State, 2004. Division of Child Care and Early Learning, Economic Services Administration, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, 2005, page 63 and Tables A1, A2, A4 on pages 84-87.

Department of Health - Healthy Child Care Washington (HCCW) Services

What is the service?

- HCCW is an Initiative administered by the Washington State Department of Health committed to building a system to improve the quality of child care through promoting and integrating health and safety in child care and early childhood
- Website: <http://www.healthychildcare-wa.org/index.htm>

Systems Level Activities:

HCCW works with several programs within the Washington State Department of Health as well as externally to establish, enhance, and increase partnerships with child care and early childhood stakeholders.

- HCCW disseminates *Bright Futures* materials with national guidelines for children's healthy growth and development to child care providers
- HCCW contracts with *Pacific Rim Real-Time Systems, Inc.* to provide consultation, technical assistance, and training to Child Care Health Consultants (CCHCs) at Local Health Jurisdictions.
- HCCW provides intensive training emphasizing the social-emotional needs of children and how CCHCs can assist child care providers to attend to the deeper needs underlying outward socio-behavioral manifestations through the Promoting First Relationships (PFR) Program. Website: <http://www.son.washington.edu/centers/pfr/>
- HCCW partners with *Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network* to help align health and safety in child care and link local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies with their Local Health Jurisdictions. See Washington State Resource and Referral Network below.
- HCCW is involved in an outcome-based evaluation to identify the changes that occur in the lives of families and communities as a result of Child Care Health Consultation. Website: www.organizationalresearch.com

Child Care Health Consultation

- Child Care Health Consultants (CCHCs), located in every Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ) in Washington State, provide consultation, technical assistance, and training regarding health, safety, and development of infants and toddlers to licensed child care centers and homes in their local communities. Most CCHCs are Public Health Nurses.
- CCHCs work with child care providers to promote actual changes in knowledge, behavior, policy, environment, and communication with parents.

Who is eligible?

- Child care health consultation is available to all licensed or exempt child care providers caring for infants and toddlers. Some counties have additional funding sources and services are available to providers caring for older children. While services are also available to informal child care providers (family, friends and neighbors), an emphasis is placed on licensed providers.

Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network Services

What is the service?

- This network of eighteen local programs receives funding in part from DCCEL. The program is designed to disseminate information on licensing and child care providers to parents, train professionals, provide caregiver support, and assist businesses in offering programs that benefit employees.⁶
- Website: <http://www.childcarenet.org/>

How/where is it provided?

- There are 18 local programs serving Washington families across the state.

Who is eligible?

- All Washington families are eligible.

Who is receiving the service?

- During 2004 the Network's member agencies:⁷
 - Helped 13,239 low-income families find child care
 - Assisted 23,687 families and 34,472 children
 - Fielded 105,554 calls
- The annual median Washington State household income for 2004 was \$51,762. The following table illustrates the average costs of child care centers and family child care (FCC).⁴

Average Costs of Child Care Centers and Family Child Care

	Centers		Family Child Care	
Age of Child	2004 Median Annual Cost	% of Median Household Income	2004 Median Annual Cost	% of Median Household Income
Infant	\$8,476	16%	\$6,500	13%
Toddler	\$7,280	14%	\$6,500	13%
Preschool	\$6,648	13%	\$5,720	11%
School Age	\$3,796	7%	\$2,860	6%

⁶ Washington State Resource and Referral Network, "History, Mission, and Vision." Website: <http://www.childcarenet.org/history.htm>. Accessed October 2005.

⁷ Washington State Resource and Referral Network, "2005 State Data Report". Website: <http://www.childcarenet.org/05%20State%20Report.pdf>. Accessed October 2005

Schools Out Washington Services

What is the service?

- *Schools Out Washington (SOWA)* is an organization focused on improving after-school programs for children ages 5-14 years around Washington State
- This community-based organization focuses on enhancing the availability, affordability, and quality of after-school programs for all children; with a special emphasis on those with low socioeconomic status and children with special needs
- Website: <http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/>

How/where is it provided?

- SOWA provides a variety of services to improve after-school programs, including professional development, advocacy, funding opportunities, and educational tools.

Issues/concerns³

- Three of the top challenges to finding child care are:
 - Affordability
 - The cost of child care has increased much faster than inflation over the past 14 years, and currently is estimated to be between 6-26% of the median household income in Washington.
 - Quality of care
 - With increased understanding of the importance of early learning and socioemotional development, the quality of child care is paramount. It is challenging to ensure quality care given the low wages and turnover in child care providers.
 - Availability of openings
 - Approximately 17% of total licensed child care slots are vacant across the state, but this proportion varies by age of the child and location.